



Spaying & Neutering Information for Puppy Owners



- ❃ There are a variety of health reasons to spay female pets and neuter male pets, but the decision of when to spay or neuter your dog is not a “one size fits all” matter. It is important to take into account your dog’s breed, family history, temperament and intended lifestyle in addition to your own desires and expectations.
- ❃ As a general rule, male canines will benefit physically by going through puberty. These physical advantages are primarily musculoskeletal in nature. We recommend allowing male canines to reach at least one year of age prior to castration. For larger breed male canines, we may recommend 18 to 24 months prior to castration. For all male canines, it is reasonable to allow them to remain intact through early adulthood. The primary exception to these guidelines is a male canine who is showing undesirable behaviors as a puppy. Some of these behaviors may warrant an earlier neuter.
- ❃ Guidelines for when to spay your female canine are not as certain. Much research has been done on the risks and benefits of prepubescent versus delayed spaying of females. There is no conventional, clear-cut “best time”. The lack of consensus is due to variability that exists between various breeds in these research attempts. Our general guidelines are to spay small female canines at a time just prior to their first heat cycle and to spay larger females a few months after their first heat cycle. Certain breeds, family histories or intended lifestyles may warrant different recommendations. A discussion about when your female canine should be spayed is an important part of our puppy care visits.
- ❃ Spaying a female dog eliminates future heat cycles. Neutering a male dog reduces the breeding instinct, making them less inclined to roam and more content to stay at home.
- ❃ We recommend that you do not schedule your dog’s spay procedure during or just after the heat cycle as doing the procedure at this time carries more risk and can create some behavioral issues in the immediate period after the procedure.
- ❃ Prior to spaying or neutering your dog, we require a basic bloodwork panel. This routine panel will screen for issues that may complicate anesthesia. We encourage you to schedule bloodwork a week prior to surgery, providing a cost savings to you and the opportunity to address any health concerns prior to the procedure.
- ❃ If your dog is not already microchipped, we strongly encourage you to have this done at the time of the procedure. Should your animal get lost, having a microchip is the best way to increase the chance of being reunited.